CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/1594
7 September 1999

Original: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 7 SEPTEMBER 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF PAKISTAN ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT TRANSMITTING THE TEXT OF A STATEMENT MADE BY MR. SHAMSHAD AHMAD, FOREIGN SECRETARY OF PAKISTAN, AT THE INSTITUTE OF STRATEGIC STUDIES IN ISLAMABAD ON 7 SEPTEMBER 1999 ON "REGIONAL AND GLOBAL IMPLICATIONS OF INDIA'S NUCLEAR DOCTRINE"

I have the honour to transmit to you the text of a statement made by Mr. Shamshad Ahmad, Foreign Secretary of Pakistan, at the Institute of Strategic Studies in Islamabad on 7 September 1999 on "Regional and Global Implications of India's Nuclear Doctrine".

I shall be grateful if this statement is circulated as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament.

(Signed) Munir Akram
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Statement by Mr. Shamshad Ahmad,
Foreign Secretary of Pakistan
at the Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad
on 7th September 1999

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

India's nuclear doctrine announced last month is a logical evolution of India's nuclear ambitions that it pursued since its independence. India developed its nuclear option as a matter of choice and policy consistent with its long held vision as a regional hegemon and a major global power. In contrast, Pakistan has exercised nuclear option only in response to the compulsions of its security environment. It is easy to understand why Pakistan's security concerns are so deep and so constant.

Since its independence, Pakistan has confronted nothing but endemic hostility from India which imposed three wars on us and dismembered our country in 1971. It used military force to occupy Kashmir, Hyderabad and Junagarh in violation of the principles governing the independence and partition of India. It annexed the independent Kingdom of Sikkim and occupied the Portuguese territory of Goa in 1961.

Even now, India is engaged in a brutal war to suppress the right of self-determination of the people of occupied Jammu and Kashmir. Despite its propaganda about the so-called threat from China, almost all of India's military assets - an army of 1.2 million, over 700 combat aircraft, a large naval flotilla - are deployed against Pakistan.

For the past fifty years, India has sought, with single-minded devotion, the re-enactment of the Akhand Bharat or greater India dream. It has sought to dominate its periphery and the entire Indian Ocean region, as the first step towards recognition of its stature as a global power.

In contrast, Pakistan's foremost concern has been to safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity. We neither seek nor endorse spheres of influence. Territorial aggrandizement has never been our policy, indeed it is an anachronistic concept.

Before coming to power, India's present Hindu fundamentalist leadership had declared that it would conduct nuclear tests and "induct" nuclear weapons. It also threatened to launch attacks on Pakistan across the Line of Control in Kashmir. The first of these threats was carried out last year. A year later saw the crisis along the LoC in Kashmir where active conflict continues and now India has outlined its military goals in its nuclear doctrine.

In evaluating the implications, it is essential to be aware of the ambitions of India, and the compulsions of

Pakistan. What is clear is that India's nuclear programme is status driven, ours security motivated. Unfortunately, our friends never paid sufficient attention to the root cause of insecurity and instability in South Asia, the unresolved Kashmir issue which continues to afflict the region with the real prospect of a wider conflict between two nuclear weapon states.

Ladies and gentlemen,

India's ambition to acquire nuclear weapons, though often disguised by deceit and hypocrisy, has been no secret. It acquired a research reactor and other nuclear facilities outside international safeguards in the 1960s. It refused to sign the NPT in 1968. It insisted on the legitimacy of "peaceful nuclear explosions". India, meanwhile, diverted nuclear fuel from its "civilian" programme to explode a so-called "peaceful" nuclear device in May 1974. Since then, it expanded the scope of its unsafeguarded nuclear facilities and fissile material stocks. Nuclear weapons development was accompanied by the development of nuclear delivery systems, specially ballistic missiles.

Pakistan's actions in the nuclear and missile fields - were taken at each stage, in response to India's escalatory steps.

Through its research and development programmes, Pakistan was able to acquire the capability for nuclear enrichment and missile technology despite discriminatory embargoes and restrictions. We now have the capability and the potential to respond to India's escalatory steps.

However, our policies have always been marked by restraint and responsibility. We have been sensitive, in fact responsive, to global non-proliferation concerns.

In 1968 when the NPT was being negotiated, Pakistan's concern was focussed on obtaining positive security assurances for non-nuclear weapons states. On the other hand, India was pre-occupied with its challenge to the global nuclear paradigm which the Treaty was seeking to establish.

Since then, every single non-proliferation proposal for South Asia has emanated from Pakistan. After the Indian nuclear test in 1974, we tabled a resolution at the UN, year after year, for a South Asian Nuclear Weapons Free Zone.

We proposed a joint Pakistan-India declaration renouncing the acquisition or manufacture of nuclear weapons in 1978. The same year we suggested mutual inspection by Pakistan and India of each other's nuclear facilities.

In 1979, we proposed simultaneous adherence to the NPT by Pakistan and India as well as simultaneous acceptance of full-scope IAEA safeguards.

We proposed a bilateral or regional Nuclear Test Ban Treaty in 1987, a South Asia Zero-Missile Zone in 1994 and a non-aggression pact in 1997.

Unfortunately, these proposals which sought to establish a non-discriminatory and equitable nuclear weapons free regime in our region were rejected by India and ignored by the international community. In fact, India was encouraged to pursue its nuclear weapons programme.

It was only after 1989, when it became clear that we had acquired a nuclear capability, that a regional approach towards non-proliferation was endorsed by the major powers. Even then, no sooner had Soviet troops withdrawn from Afghanistan, sanctions were imposed on us. This only further encouraged India to proceed apace with its nuclear and missile development progrmmes. The objective of non-proliferation in South Asia was thus defeated. The fault was certainly not ours.

The nuclearization of South Asia is neither of our making nor of our choice, but it is now a reality that cannot be wished away.

Three years ago, Pakistan voted in favour of the CTBT in the UN General Assembly. India opposed it.

Never was the threat to our independence, in fact our survival, more pronounced than in the fateful month of May 1998.

India's nuclear tests radically altered the strategic balance in South Asia. Peace was imperilled. We faced nuclear blackmail. The Indian leadership demanded that we must accept the new reality of the changed strategic balance. They even questioned the credibility of our nuclear capability. This posed the risk of a serious and disastrous miscalculation on their part.

We neither had a security alliance nor could we depend on the nuclear umbrella of the major powers. We realized that we were alone in the face of a nuclear India.

It became imperative for us to respond. We restored the strategic balance and established nuclear deterrence. We have no doubt that our tests served the interest of peace and stability in South Asia.

It was not Pakistan but India which added the nuclear dimension to the perilous security environment of our region.

India thus irrevocably shattered the objective of a nuclear free South Asia.

Pakistan was obliged to conduct its nuclear tests to maintain the credibility of nuclear deterrence against India. Following the tests we acted with a great sense of responsibility. We emphasized the need to prevent a nuclear

and missile arms race. We declared a unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing. We expressed our desire for mutual restraint in the operational deployment of nuclear weapons. We sought to evolve a risk reduction mechanism and to maintain deterrence at the minimum level.

We have always believed that nuclear deterrence could be exercised by Pakistan and India at the lowest possible level. We were, therefore, initially encouraged by Indian statements that it wanted to maintain a position of "credible minimum deterrence". However, New Delhi left the interpretation of this concept deliberately vague. Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh asserted that "credible minimum deterrence" was a dynamic concept and not fixed in "time and space". Thus India was again playing the role of a wolf in sheep's clothing. Its true nuclear and military ambitions were soon to be unmasked.

Following the initiation of our dialogue with the United States last summer, Pakistan developed the concept of three inter-related elements to enhance peace and security in South Asia i.e. nuclear restraint and stabilization, conventional arms balance and the resolution of outstanding conflicts and disputes. This concept spelt out, in fairly specific terms, a Strategic Restraint Regime which encompassed prevention of nuclear and ballistic missile race, risk reduction mechanism and the proposition that nuclear deterrence should be pursued at the lowest possible level.

The concept of a Strategic Restraint Regime was shared and discussed in our dialogue with the United States, both at the political and expert levels. It was also formally proposed to India last October.

The nuclear doctrine announced by India is obviously incompatible with both the idea of "credible minimum deterrence", as well as the concept of a "Strategic Restraint Regime".

The Indian nuclear doctrine reveals New Delhi's goal of acquiring massive nuclear war-fighting capabilities - a "triad" of up to 400 operationally deployed ground, air and sea-based nuclear weapons. Not all of the five NPT nuclear weapons States possess such a triad. A nuclear force as large as this may be credible but it will certainly not be "minimum".

The announcement of the Indian doctrine has confirmed the concerns which Pakistan has so often expressed to the international community regarding India's nuclear ambitions. The size of India's nuclear arsenal, and its operational deployment, would transform it into a threatening "first strike" force against Pakistan and other neighbouring countries. Such massive deployment cannot conceivably be designed purely for deterrence. India's profession of "non-first use" of nuclear weapons is only a facade to justify a second strike capability and large scale acquisition and deployment of nuclear weapons. Also, as we have pointed out, India's "offer" of a no-first-use and non-use against non-

nuclear States is not meant to reassure Pakistan or others, but it is primarily aimed at securing for itself the status of a nuclear weapon State.

The world must fully comprehend the near and long-term strategic implications of India's nuclear doctrine. India seeks to develop a massive nuclear weapons capability, but this is not designed to maintain "credible deterrence" against Pakistan, nor is it meant for nuclear deterrence against China. For "minimum credible deterrence" India does not need 150 to 400 nuclear warheads. It does not need sea-based and submarine-based nuclear capabilities. It does not require huge conventional land, sea and air forces, including aircraft carriers and advanced strike aircraft.

Certainly, deterrence is not India's desire. India's plans for developing a vast conventional force coupled with a large nuclear arsenal are aimed at building an offensive, and not a defensive, military capability.

India is feverishly trying to establish, within the next two decades, total military hegemony in South Asia and beyond, control the sea lanes, from the oil-rich Gulf in the West to the Straits of Malacca in the East, and compete for influence on the global stage with the major powers.

The militaristic dreams of the current Hindu fundamentalist leadership are a reflection of India's aggressive mythology to which I have already referred. The leadership in New Delhi seem to be living in a time warp. They equate greatness with military prowess. They forget that in today's integrated world, greatness comes primarily from economic and technological advancement and not from military capability.

These Indian dreams of grandeur constitute a threat to this region, to the world, and indeed to the poor and deprived people of India itself.

India's planned military programme will be extremely expensive Estimates of the cost vary widely from 20 billion dollars up to hundreds of billions of dollars.

What also needs to be emphasized is that these huge outlays will be in addition to massive military expenditures which India is to incur under the defence supply agreements, for example, with Russia and France and its on-going indigenous build-up of conventional forces. The manufacture of hundreds of warheads and missiles, the acquisition of satellite early-warning capabilities, the development of sea-based and submarine-based nuclear systems, will all entail huge additional costs.

The development of such a nuclear arsenal by India will oblige Pakistan to take appropriate action to preserve the credibility of its nuclear deterrence posture and the capability for conventional self-defence. One recourse is for Pakistan to engage in a nuclear and conventional arms race with India. It will require Pakistan to expend even

large resources for defence, further eroding its economic and development goals.

A prevalent theory is that, by pushing Pakistan into a huge military build up, India intends to destroy Pakistan's economy. An analogy is drawn with that of the Soviet economy which crumbled as a consequence of the Cold War arms race against the United States. The error in this theory is the assumption that we will, like lemmings, follow India's militaristic example.

Let me state clearly and unequivocally that Pakistan can and will find ways and means to maintain credible nuclear deterrence against India without the need to match it - bomb for bomb, missile for missile.

Apart from provoking a response from Pakistan, India's plans may also compel some of the nuclear weapons states, and others in Asia - from the Gulf to the Pacific - to respond to the projected Indian military build-up. Thus, the pursuit of India's nuclear doctrine will be highly destabilizing for peace and security across the Indian Ocean region and beyond.

Furthermore, the Indian nuclear doctrine will militate against major nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation objectives, including perhaps the CTBT and the Fissile Materials Treaty.

If its doctrine is to be implemented, India will require nuclear warheads to be placed on its short, medium and longer-range missiles. It would want to match the other nuclear powers by developing thermonuclear weapons. Unless India has received nuclear weapons designs from clandestine sources, it will need to conduct further nuclear weapon tests to achieve the advanced deployment capabilities it desires. In this context, we have noted that certain preparations made by India last year to conduct additional nuclear tests have not been reversed so far. We hope the guardians of non-proliferation will pressure India to reverse these preparations.

The very possibility that India may conduct further nuclear tests creates doubts in Pakistan regarding the advisability of our early adherence to the CTBT. If India does conduct further nuclear tests, this will, once again, oblige Pakistan to respond.

Further nuclear tests by India will completely subvert the CTBT. The first priority for the world must be, therefore, to press India - and not Pakistan to sign and ratify the CTBT and to reverse the preparations it has made for further nuclear tests.

India's intention to manufacture 400 or more nuclear warheads is also of special concern for Pakistan. India will require substantial quantities of fissile material for such a large nuclear force. Under these circumstances,

neither India nor Pakistan could accept the conclusion of an FMCT, much less a moratorium on fissile material production.

Other reports suggest that India already posseses sufficient plutonium to build 400 warheads. If it does not, it will have to accelerate fissile material production in its various unsafeguarded facilities to reach the desired level of stocks.

In either event, Pakistan will be obliged to also build up the amount of fissile material in its inventory in order to maintain the capability for credible nuclear deterrence against the anticipated large Indian nuclear force. Therefore, the pursuit of India's nuclear doctrine will deal a body-blow to the prospects of concluding a Treaty - so widely desired - to halt fissile materials production.

The Indian doctrine also envisages the maintenance of "highly effective conventional military capabilities" ostensibly to "raise the threshold" of conventional and nuclear conflict. This argument is, of course, only an ex-post facto justification for the huge conventional arms build up in which India is already engaged. The growing imbalance in conventional capabilities will accentuate Pakistan's reliance on nuclear deterrence. This will have the consequence of lowering, not raising, the "threshold" of possible use of nuclear weapons in South Asia. But the choice is not ours to make; it is India's.

I must remind those countries which have concluded agreements to supply India with technologically advanced and lethal weapons systems - such as new Mirage 2000s, SU-27s, SU-30s, and S-300 ABM systems - which can be all employed both in the conventional and nuclear mode, that they will be contributing to the destabilization of South Asia. Their actions will have significant negative consequences for Pakistan's security and for the welfare of the peoples of our entire region.

Pakistan has alerted the major powers and other members of the international community to the dangers posed by India's nuclear doctrine which graphically sets out New Delhi's political and military ambitions, nuclear as well as conventional. We appreciate the concerns which have been expressed publicly by some states, and privately by many more, regarding India's nuclear and military intentions and approach. We do not believe that any major power - even those supplying weapons for profit to India - would go so far as to "welcome", or express "understanding" for the Indian doctrine.

In response to criticism, Indian officials, and some of New Delhi's "friends", have observed that the Indian "doctrine" is as yet only a "draft" for debate and not official policy. In fact, the "doctrine" is the consensus report of the National Advisory Board on Security constituted by the Government of India. It was officially released to the public by the National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister of India.

Too often in the past have we seen the manner in which certain major powers have accepted at face value India's ambiguous assurances despite Pakistan's cautionary advice. This happened in the 1960s when we warned that India would secretly divert fuel from the unsafeguarded Cirrus reactor. In 1965, the two superpowers rejected our demarche in the Geneva Disarmament Committee warning against an Indian nuclear explosion. In April last year, just before India conducted its nuclear tests, we were told by high-level emissaries of a great power that they had been impressed by India's self-restraint.

Our friends should not be taken in, yet again, by India's double-talk and sophistry. Its dangerous plans and contentions are writ large for the world to see. Turning a blind eye to these ominous signs will have grave implications.

Pakistan believes that the international community needs to respond in a coherent and determined way to this "doctrine" in order to arrest India's dangerous plans for nuclear and conventional arms escalation. Specially, the international community needs to ask India to assure its neighbours and the world that:

one: it will not conduct further nuclear tests. Until the CTBT comes into force, Pakistan and India could formalize their unilateral moratoriums into a binding bilateral arrangement;

two: it will not operationally deploy its nuclear weapons and will keep them in a non-deployed mode;

three: it will not build the hundreds of nuclear warheads as envisaged by its nuclear "doctrine";

four: it will not produce or possess the large stocks of fissile materials which would enable it to build a large arsenal of nuclear weapons in the future. In this context, steps should be taken to achieve a balance between the unequal stockpiles of India and Pakistan;

five: it will not seek to create sea-based and submarine-based nuclear forces;

six: it will not seek to acquire, develop or deploy anti-ballistic missile systems which could escalate the development and deployment of nuclear arms in the region;

seven: it will refrain from any military-related actions in space;

eight: it will review and restrain its plans for the acquisition and development of advanced aircraft, nuclear submarines and other technologically advanced weapons systems which could accentuate and accelerate the nuclear and conventional arms race in the region;

nine: it will seriously address and resolve the outstanding issues with Pakistan, specially the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, with the active support and involvement of the international community; and

ten: it will enter into negotiations with Pakistan to elaborate a "Strategic Restraint Regime" for South Asia.

In the context of promoting regional military restraint, Pakistan would be greatly encouraged if the international community were to extend its support to our proposal for a "Strategic Restraint Regime" in South Asia.

Also consistent with the objectives of preventing an arms race in this region, those countries which are engaged in the supply of advanced conventional and dual-use weapons technology to India should halt their supplies and such cooperation with New Delhi. We appeal, in particular, to Russia and France in this respect.

In order to promote these objectives of peace and stability in South Asia, and to avert the threat posed by India's nuclear and military plans, Pakistan is maintaining active contacts and consultations with the international community. We shall pursue these consultations at the forthcoming UN General Assembly and in other relevant forums with a view to evolving a broadly agreed approach to deal with the threats to regional and global peace and security emerging from India's political and military ambitions as revealed in its nuclear doctrine.